(c) and (d) This project is in continuation of an old project which was approved during 1992-93 at an estimated cost of Rs. 16.80 crores for providing drinking water to 644 villages. The components of the earlier project namely headworks, pump house, treatment units, pipeline etc. are designed for carrying the requirement of subsequent phase also. Since the components of the earlier project are still to be taken-up for implementation, the Central Government has already informed the State Government regarding a low progress of the earlier project. The project now submitted is under consideration of the Government and a team will visit the project areas both for old project and the new project and will also review the progress of the first project. The report of the team will be put to the Screening Sanctioning and Review Committee for consideration.

Import Duty on Cable

1631. SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the duty differential allowed for Raw Materi-als for manufacturer of cables over that on finished cables;

(b) the estimated cost structure of the domestic cable industry vis-a-vis the external competitors; and

(c) the steps Government propose to take to restructure the import duty on the cables so that large scale imports which results in huge outgo foreign exchange is contained?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Cables attract peak rate of basic customs duty of 40%. Major raw materials required for manufacture of cables. i.e. aluminium and copper attract basis customs duty of 20% and 30% respectively.

(b) Cost structure of domestic cable industry vis-a-vis external competitors is not readily available and is being ascertained.

(c) There is no proposal at present to restructure the import duty on cables.

Changes in the Exim Policy

1632. SHRI SYDAIAH KOTA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have started reviewing the new Exim Policy and incorporating some suggestions put forward by the Industry;

(b) if so, the details of the suggestions put forward by the Industry and to what extent these have been reviewed by the Ministry;

(c) whether the problems a faced by the Gems and Jewellery exporters are likely to be reviewed in the light of the new Exim Policy; and

(d) the time by which the new Exim Policy is likely to be impiemented ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (DR. BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) to (d) The review of Exim Policy is a continuous exercise which is based upon suggestions received from Trade and Industry. Amendments are made in the Exim Policy for making it more exporter friendly and also to make it more effective instrument of export promotion. So far, 8 Notifications and 26 Public Notices have been issued making amendments in the Exim Policy and Handbook of Procedures respectively.

The problems faced by Gem & Jewellery exporters were reviewed and Notification and Public Notice have already been issued. EOU/EPZ units in Gem & Jewellery sector are not allowed DTA state by making a payment of applicable duties either by EOU/EPZ a units or by the DTA buyer. Regional offices of DGFT located in Cuttack and Surat have now been allowed to operate the Gem & Jewellery Scheme.

The new Exim Policy is effective from 1.4.97 and is valid up to 31.3.2002.

Rise in the Prices of Tea

1633. SHRI N. RAMAKRISHNA REDDY : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware of the abnormal rise in the prices of tea during the last two months; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to bring down the tea prices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (DR. BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Average auction prices of teas at Indian auction centres have increased by approximately 16% during last two months viz. May-June 1997 as compared to April 1997. However, retail prices of large selling varieties of tea have not registered significant increase during the same period.

Prices of tea are not controlled. They are determined by demand and supply position in the market. However, in order to stabilise the prices, Tea Board has held discussions with the tea industry on the current tea price situation. The industry has been advised to ensure availability of sufficient tea in the market and strict compliance with the Tea Marketing (Control) Order 1994. A close watch is being kept on the situation.

[Translation]

Royalty on Coal

1634. SHRI RAJESH RAJAN ALIAS PAPPU YADAV:

SHRI MAHABIR LAL BISHVAKARMA :

SHRI HANSRAJ AHIR :

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) the amount of royalty on coal to be paid by Union Government to Bihar and other States as on March 31,1997;